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SKYLINE FARMS
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

JUL 18 1939 *

Dep't of Agriculture

OFFICIAL NAME: Skyline Farms

LOCATION: In Jackson county, 19 miles from Scottsboro, in northeastern Alabama.
Project headquarters: Scottsboro, Alabama.

HISTORY OF PROJECT: This project was started in 1935, when the Federal Emergency Relief Corporation was requested by the Alabama Emergency Relief Administration to develop a rural and industrial community in Jackson county. It was approved and started with 150 families in November, 1935. Development was begun under direction of the Alabama Relief Administration in 1936. It was then taken over by the Resettlement Administration, now the Farm Security Administration, which re-subdivided the property into farming units and provided suitable buildings. Final approval of the last of 11 tracts was given on November 12, 1938.

PURPOSE OF PROJECT: To provide adequate and permanent farm homes for mountain families who were on the relief rolls and for resettlement of families forced to move because of high TVA developments near Skyline which flood a large part of the farm lands in that area. The project is intended to give these families an opportunity for rehabilitation through economic, educational and social advantages not available to them in their former surroundings.

ECONOMIC PLAN OF OPERATION: This agricultural community covers 13,181 acres, and is divided into 181 units. Of these, 163 are farm units, ranging from 23 to 132 acres, and 18 are subsistence units having two to eight acres. Thirty-two units have been sold to homesteaders on a long-time, low interest basis.

As no farming had previously been done on the land, supplementary income is needed by the families until sufficient acreage can be cleared. To meet this need, a hosiery mill has been built on the project to provide employment for 160 persons. The factory and machinery of the hosiery plant belong to the homesteaders. They have formed an operating company with the Dexdale Hosiery Mills, which operates and manages the plant.

Primary emphasis, however, is put on a "live-at-home" program. Farm and home plans with technical guidance from trained personnel give the homesteaders a practical working basis for raising their standard of living. Every unit has a garden and practically all families own pressure cookers, with the result that each family canned an average of 470 quarts of fruits and vegetables in 1938. A start was also made on a subsistence livestock program with hogs as a source of cash income as well as for home use. Although poultry was raised only for home use, ten homesteaders have been so successful that they are going into commercial production, raising broilers for the early spring market.

Cotton, potatoes and tomatoes are also relied upon for cash income after provision is made for home needs. Cotton has proved more reliable than tomatoes and potatoes, as the homesteaders are experienced in the growing of this crop. They are beginning to learn, however, about the growing, harvesting and marketing of truck crops. Markets have already been established with chain stores in Atlanta, Birmingham and Huntsville for potatoes and tomatoes.

The growing of sweet potatoes, beans and carrots will be added to these crops for additional cash income. Plans are underway to build a syrup mill and sugar cane may also be raised. This mill will be part of a small chain of syrup mills which have already marketed their product.

Buildings on the project consist of the individual four or five-room frame house, barn, smokehouse, poultry house and sanitary privy located on individual units; as well as a combination community and school building, built of native rock, an office building and a health center.

The school has an enrollment of about 420, with students ranging from 6 to 18 years of age. The school is also the community center where farmers gather to discuss their work, wives attend home demonstrations, and social and recreational activities are held.

A full time nurse is employed on the project. She is encouraging better sanitary conditions among the homesteaders and has interested them in preventive medicine. A medical care plan provides homesteaders with medical attention at a nominal cost. Clinics are held for typhoid, small-pox and diphtheria. Pre-natal and post-natal care is stressed and school children are examined periodically for bad teeth, eyes or tonsils.

HOMESTEADERS: These families have lived in the mountain sections for generations and represent some of the purest Anglo-Saxon strains in the country. They have been handicapped for generations by low incomes, poor diet and lack of adequate opportunities.

July 1, 1939

